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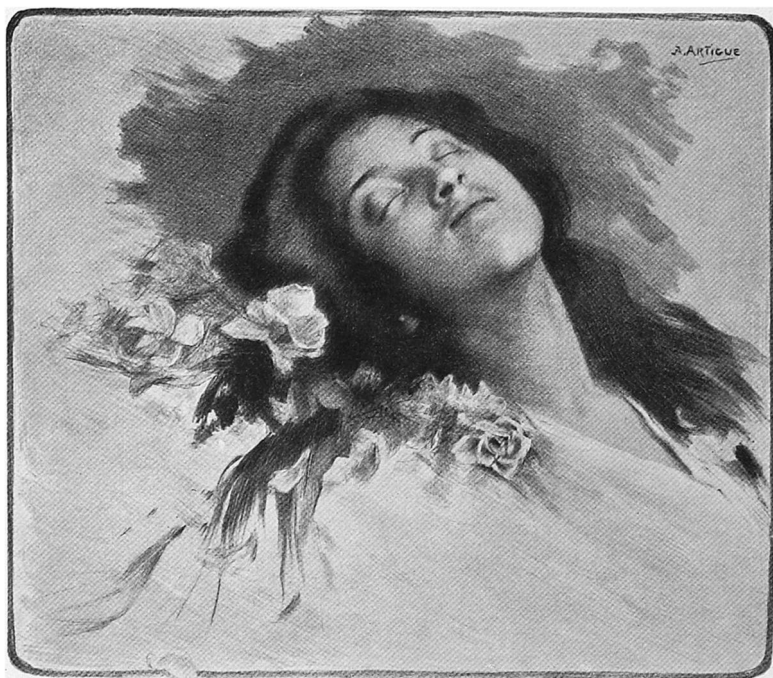
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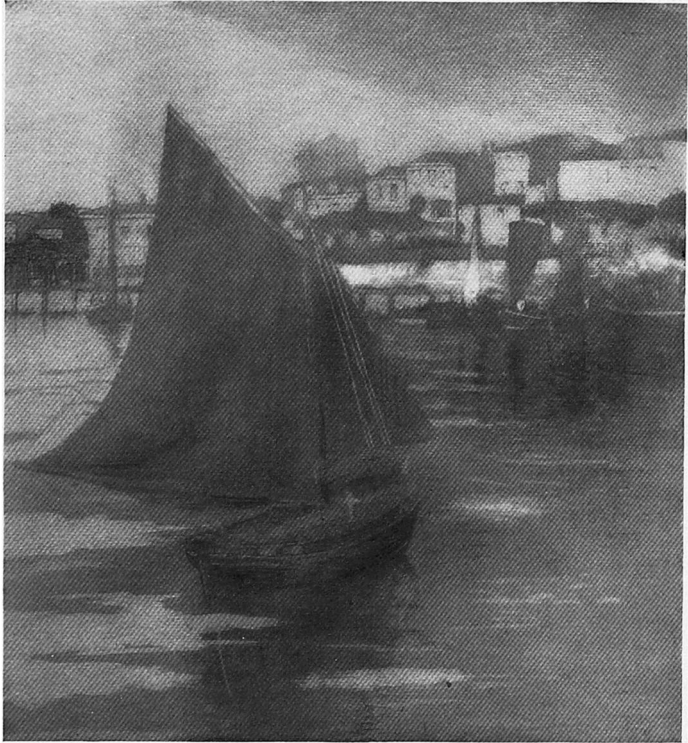
POSTER
By A. Artigue

DEMOCRACY IN ART—A CHAPTER ON COLOR PRINTS

The present is not less pre-eminently the age of democracy in art than in society, education, politics. The old idea of an aristocracy with special prerogatives is gradually being wiped out. The pre-emption of exclusive privileges by individual classes is no longer tolerated. This leveling process is inexorable, and happily its results are beneficent, since it is conferring an ever-larger measure of the pleasures and comforts of life upon those who, in a former age, would have been of the unprivileged many.

In the various forms of fine and applied art this is especially noticeable. The man in moderate circumstances to-day peremptorily demands acceptable forms of art product commensurate with his means, and there was never an opportunity like the present for artists of ability to meet, with honor and profit to themselves, this ever-growing demand. Unfortunately, too few talented workers have read the

signs of the times, and sought to adapt themselves to the new conditions. The many have sought, rather, in the anxieties and hardships incident to careers in art, to find a market for their "originals," and have been chagrined to find the public indifferent to their work,



COLORED ETCHING
By Maurice Simonet

often preferring some simple but artistic product of mechanical processes.

The artists are thus prone to complain of a lack of popular appreciation. The trouble is not with the public. There is no lack of appreciation of good things on the part of the masses, who, for the most part, are clamorous for beautiful things, greedy of new and artistic effects, generous in their patronage of new processes that meet the needs and demands of the times.

In an article in BRUSH AND PENCIL some months ago a writer

stanchly maintained that the machine had come in response to the call of necessity, and that it was not less a privilege than a duty for the artist to co-operate with the machine and enhance the quality of its output. As regards pictures, the truth of this is clearly shown by the popularity of many artists who have deliberately undertaken to co-operate with the machine, and supply it with designs for lithographs and posters and plates for colored etchings. Some of these artists have been doing remarkably good work, and much as the workers in oil and water-colors may be loath to admit it, the print-shop, in a sense, has outrivalled the salon.

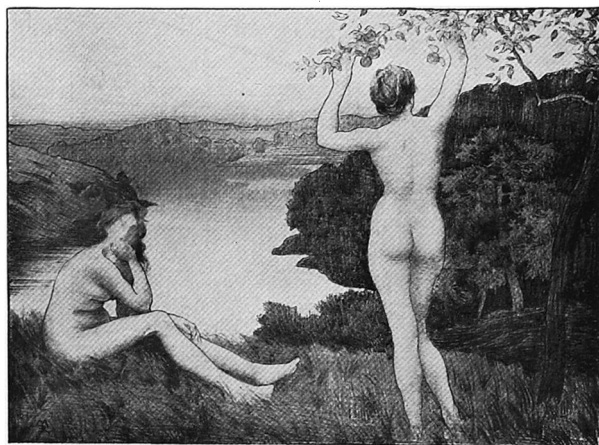
Not a little has been said of the passing of the poster, and of the decadence of the lithograph.

The poster has not passed, nor is the lithograph decadent. Much is even now said in criticism of the colored etching, but work that is really superb in this line of art product has been done, and if I mis-

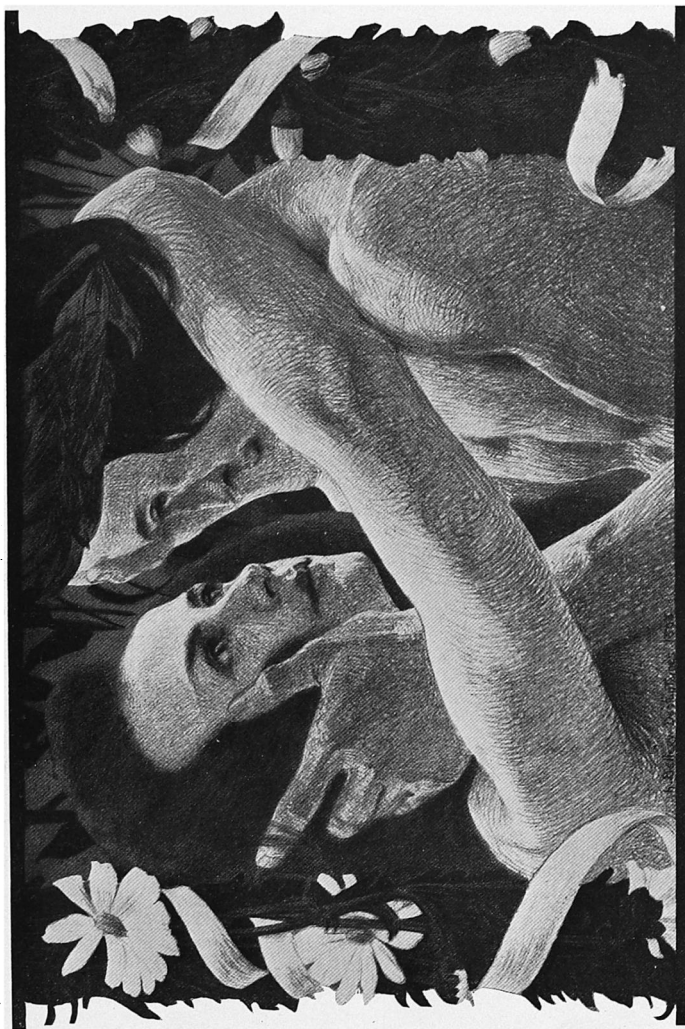


POSTER
By Richard Ranft

take not, the colored etching has a great future, since it is of the many and for the many. In regard to this form of art, Gabriel Mourey recently said: "Like colored lithography, the colored etching answers to the



CHARACTERISTIC POSTER



LITHOGRAPH IN THREE COLORS
By H. Bellety Desfontaines

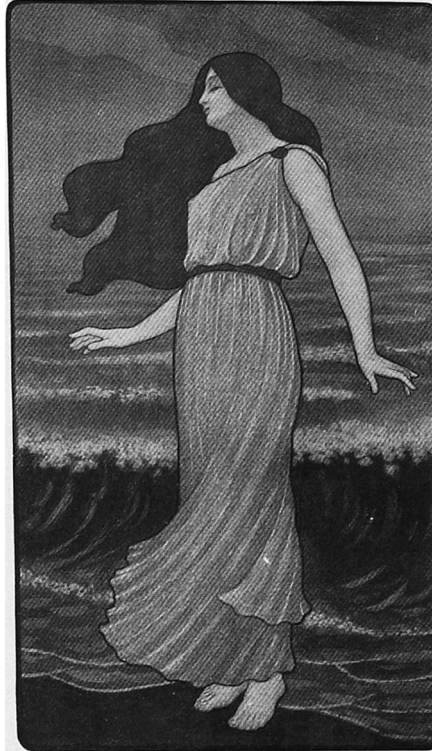


special necessities of a democratic and leveling age like ours. Should we not then rejoice to see art in all its forms permeating the life of to-day? The colored print has largely assisted in its diffusion. Many a humble home is to-day adorned by one of Henri Rivière's 'Aspects de la Nature' or his 'Paysages Parisiens,' or a polychrome engraving, or a print of one of Nicholson's wood blocks, so remarkable in their mixed savor of the modern and the archaic. Is not this a proof of progress? Here we have real works of art within the reach of all, some costing no more than six or eight shillings apiece, and others a sovereign or two. The day is rapidly departing when the principal value of a work of art lay in the fact that it was unique. Is not a colored etching by Raffaëlli of twenty or thirty printings, none of which exactly resembles the other, more valuable from an artistic point of view than a—happily!—'unique and original' canvas by one of the innumerable medalists of the 'official' Salons?"

Unfortunately in the development of reproductive processes fancy has run rampant in all sorts of grotesque creations, and bad taste has flaunted itself in brilliant colors and inharmonious juxtapositions.

Time was when the word "poster" was almost synonymous with mere oddity in the way of fanciful compositions and strange, unbeautiful color schemes. It is well that posters of this class should pass. Colored lithographs, with startling arrangements of brilliant colors, have too often made a mockery of the more sober and more artistic lithographs that preceded them.

But these are merely the vagaries of new modes of expression, and the extravagances of new-found powers to which all movements and



POSTER
By Paul Berthon



COLORED ETCHING

By A. Lafitte

processes of recent origin are subject. These, however, are always corrected in the course of time, since, however much the public may be captivated by that which is merely unique or brilliant, good sense inevitably asserts itself, and the decline of demand checks production, or so transforms the character of the product as to make it conform to the dominant standard of taste.

We in America have been gross offenders in the matter of posters and lithographs. As yet colored etching is with us an untried experiment. Despite the fact that much clever and pleasing work has been done by native artists, our posters have been rather fanciful conceits, something in design and color calculated to surprise if not to shock, than works embodying a worthy idea, and cast on decorative lines that by their grace appeal to our sense of beauty and continue to please.

Designers of posters in this country—Penfield, Gould, Bradley, Hazenplug, Parrish, Ostertag, Leyendecker, and all the rest who have attempted the work—have spent their energies in the service of the advertiser. If they have suspected, they have not realized the possibilities of the poster as a picture, as a work of art for the decoration of the home, as a substitute for cheap and ineffective reproductions of finished paintings. The art sprang up in obedience to the advertisers' call, flourished for its brief day on bill-boards, in shop windows, on fences, and bare wall spaces where "Post no Bills" did not express its prohibitory mandate. While the fad lasted, town and country were ablaze with this form of poster creation, and then happily, when the advertisers' instinct prompted a new form of public announcement, the efforts of the artists passed, if not into disrepute, at least into retirement, and no one mourned their loss.

In France, however, where the poster was domiciled as early as 1830, its fate has been different. There, too, it performed the duties of town crier, and at the behest of the advertiser, announced the merits of proprietary articles, and the attractions of theaters and dance-halls. Many of the leading artists of the country, men of international reputation in their profession, did not hesitate for the moment to abandon portraiture and landscape, and design posters for purely commercial purposes. Manet, Courbet, Morin, Vierge, Doré, and other men of note were seized with the ambition to excel in poster designing, and did work in this line as eminently creditable as that which they had formerly done with pen and brush.

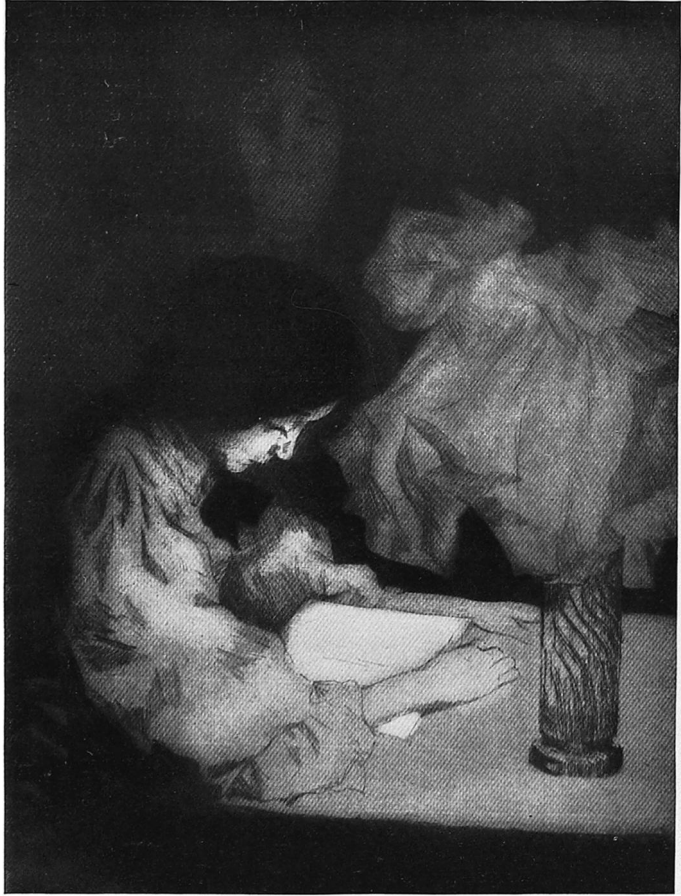
In France, too, there was a reaction, and a consequent decline in popularity, and the artists of ability who had given countenance to the poster after a number of brilliant successes lost their interest in the art and withdrew their support from it. A few gifted men, however, like Mucha and Berthon, saw a future in the bill-board sheets of early poster days, and set earnestly to work to transform the trade-catching designs of mere commercialism into a legitimate form of pictorial art, expressive of thought and sentiment, decorative in form, and soft and pleasing in color.

As a result of their efforts, the posters ceased to be an adjunct of



COLORED ETCHING
By J. A. Muenier

business houses and concert-halls, and took their place in print-shop and art-store as claimants of popular favor, and rivals of engravings, etchings, and other forms of reproductive pictorial art. The poster



COLORED ETCHING

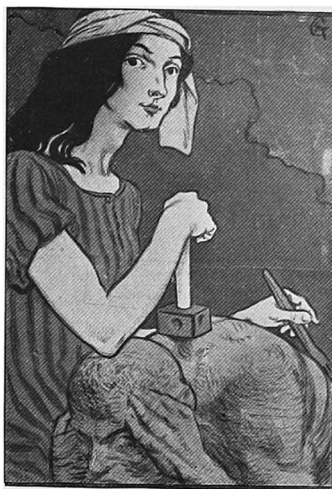
By Müller

soon came into vogue as a means for home decoration. De Requier, Grasset, Cassiers, Atché, Golay, Medaille, Cossard, and other artists following in the line of Mucha and Berthon, did effective work, each selecting characteristic motives, and developing his own peculiar style.

Shorn of every suggestion of the advertising that had first called them into being, the posters became works of art of a type not inferior in draftsmanship and coloring to the more pretentious pictures submitted at salons and competitions. Many of the artists obtained the most charming effects by taking hints from the Japanese masters, and relying for their effect on grace of draftsmanship and flat color judiciously massed. The intense colors by which so many posters and lithographs have been marred were



POSTER
By A. Willette



POSTER
By Grasset

eschewed, and color schemes as delicate as ever artist worked out with brush and palette were produced.

The public in the French capital and the provinces was caught by these fine creations, many of which were executed with as much care as the costly products of the ateliers. The subjects range from dainty bits of symbolism to boulevard scenes, from landscapes to marines; but whatever the subject chosen, whatever the color scheme adopted, whatever the mannerism indulged in by the makers, the prints were decorative and artistic, mainly, doubtless, from the fact that the pictures were studied efforts in a new line of work. They were not makeshift copies of works executed in other media.

The men undertaking the work thus became virtually the artists of the masses. There was no striving among them for salon honors, no submission of efforts to juries of admission. From

the first outline stroke to the last touch of pigment, the dominant thought, both in design and coloring, was to meet the requirements of mechanical reproduction, and at the same time to produce designs



POSTER
By Robert Engels.

and color schemes that would at once satisfy the taste of the most refined and make an appeal to people of narrow attainments and limited means. That this movement was wisely planned and has been productive of good results no one will gainsay.

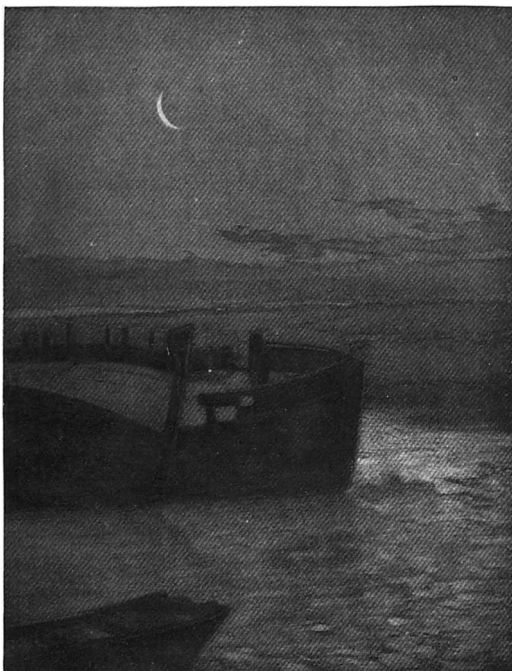
The French people are to-day unrivaled in their posters and litho-

graphs. They have not been without their monstrosities in design and coloring, but they have outgrown the crude and the bizarre. Their artists, in electing to work for the machine, have worked for



POSTER
By Maurice Eliot

the multitude. The multitude have appreciated the efforts made for them, and have responded with liberal patronage. It is the prerogative of the wealthy to enjoy a monopoly of the "originals" by medalists; but, as Mourey says, the day is at hand when mere uniqueness in the sense of exclusive copies of individual works is of slight value except as a source of pride to collectors and a means of revenue to dealers.



COLORED ETCHING
By Ch. Houdard

Except as an output of reproductive processes it would be wrong to class colored etchings, in which the French have of late been so successful, with posters and lithographs, since the process by which they are produced and the effects obtained are so radically different. A word, however, may appropriately be said here of this class of work. It is but another recognition in different form of the fact that the masses are eager for novelties of fine artistic effects, and that it is within the province and to the interest of artists

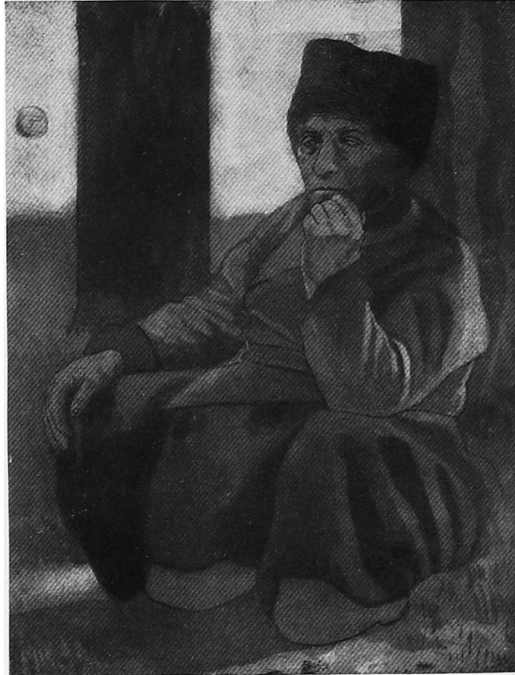
of ability to cater to the many. Colored etching, which comes as a novelty of to-day, is really a comparatively old art revived. We have little concern here with the methods of production, but mainly with the fact that the colored etching is to-day, like the poster and the lithograph in their best forms, the contribution of earnest art-workers, to meet a demand of twentieth-century life for really good art products, shorn it may be of the element of exclusiveness, but characterized by the highest degree of excellence, and at the same time within the possibilities of a public of modest means.

There is a beauty about much of this work that is really remarkable. It is at once a protest against the methods of artistic expression of other days, and a positive contribution toward the enhancement of present-day homes. Eugene Delâtre, whose "Sunset" is reproduced as the frontispiece of this issue of BRUSH AND PENCIL, Louis Legrand, Charles Houdard, Richard Ranft, Lepere, Manuel Robby, Pierre Maud, Maurice Simonet, Raffaelli, Bracquemand, Charles Maurin, Barnard B. de Monvel, and upward of eighty other

Parisian artists, are now engaged in producing plates for colored etchings.

These prints find ready sale in the Parisian capital and throughout the provincial cities. Delicacy of tone and beauty of effect are characteristics of this class of work. Delâtre's "Sunset," just referred to, gives a fair idea of the exquisite results obtained in this mode of expression by a clever artist. We ourselves are liberal importers of the better class of French posters and colored etchings, the sale of which, however, is narrowly limited to a few of the great centers of population. It is rare that products of this kind find their way into our smaller towns.

With the example of what the French have done and are doing in this line, it would seem that there is a great opportunity for the native artists of this country to emulate the example of their European *confrères*, with the assurance that works of equal merit would be eagerly sought after by those who now reluctantly but resignedly are content to buy works of less artistic merit. American publishers are not slow to embark in enterprises that have even a moderate prospect of success, and the vogue that a few of our artists in black-and-white have attained is sufficient evidence that an American Mucha or Berthon, or an American Delâtre or Ranft, would be equally popular with the picture-loving public. Illustration has offered a profitable field for many an American artist who could find no market for his original efforts in oils and water-colors, and the poster as a picture, and the colored etching, would doubtless

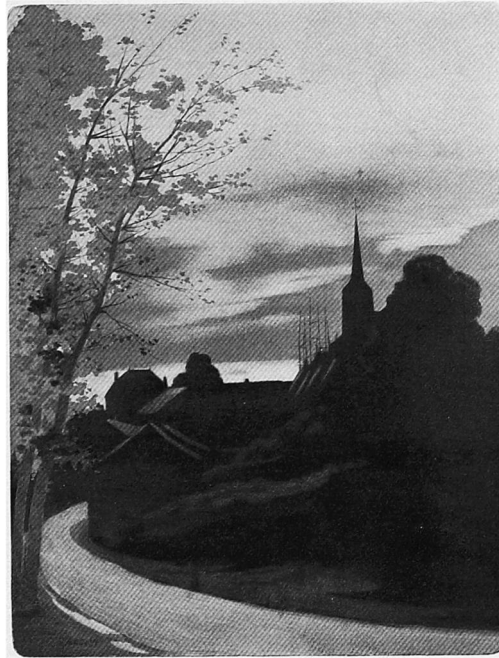


COLORED ETCHING
By Louis Potter

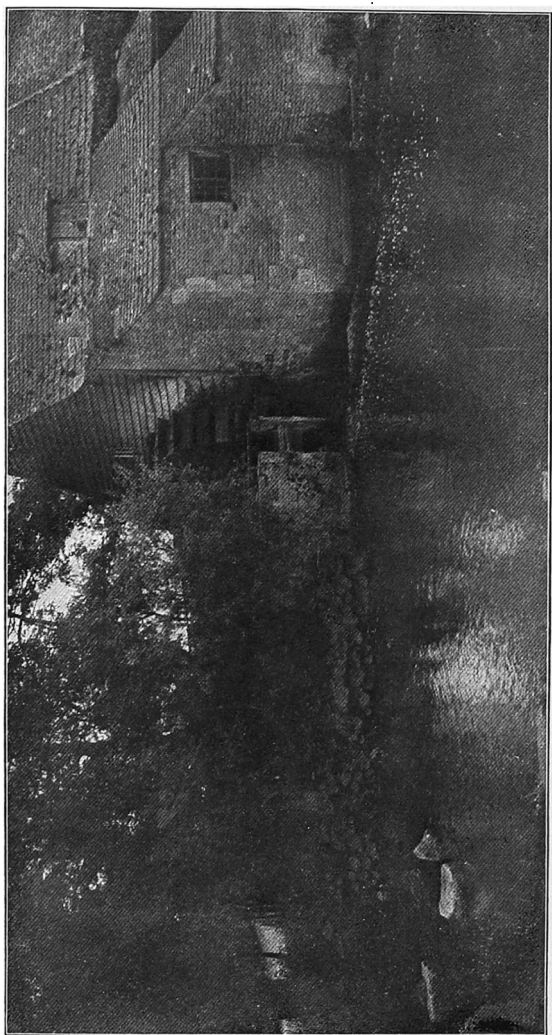
offer the same opportunities. The three-color process of reproduction recently described in BRUSH AND PENCIL is one of the wonders of modern times, but its product too often lacks the charm of the artistic. It is comparatively few paintings that are executed for the distinct purpose of reproduction; the colors are too strong, too intense, and are not massed so as to give fine reproductive effects. Often the process—the machine—accomplishes its purpose in spite of the artists instead of with their assistance. A studied, earnest effort on the part of the artists to second the machine would meet a public want and confer a public benefit.*

PERCY L. BARNARD.

* BRUSH AND PENCIL is indebted to Thayer & Chandler, Chicago, for many of the prints herewith reproduced.



POSTER
By F. Maglin



OLD MILL, NEWTON, ENGLAND
By W. P. Gunthrop



ARTISTIC PHOTOGRAPHY
Plate Fourteen